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RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 4504  
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RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 2088  
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RUEHRG/AMCONSUL RECIFE 6088  
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RUEHRI/AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO 3684  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC  
RHEBAAA/DOE WASHDC  
RUEHC/DOI WASHDC  
RUEAWJA/DOJ WASHDC  
RUEAEPA/HQ EPA WASHDC  
RUEANAT/NASA HQ WASHDC  
RUCPDC/NOAA WASHDC  
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RUEHRC/USDA WASHDC  
RUCPDOG/USDOC WASHDC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 05 BRASILIA 000071

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DEPT PASS USAID TO LAC/RSD, LAC/SAM, G/ENV, PPC/ENV  
INTERIOR FOR DIR INT AFFAIRS: K WASHBURN  
INTERIOR FOR FWS: TOM RILEY  
INTERIOR PASS USGS FOR INTERNATIONAL: J WEAVER  
COMMERCE FOR NOAA: K RIVERA  
COMMERCE FOR NMFS: A GUTIERREZ  
JUSTICE FOR ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES: JWEBB  
EPA FOR INTERNATIONAL: CAM HILL-MACON  
USDA FOR ARS/INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH: G FLANLEY  
NSF FOR INTERNATIONAL: HAROLD STOLBERG

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [SENV](#) [EAGR](#) [EAID](#) [TBIO](#) [ECON](#) [SOCI](#) [XR](#) [BR](#)

SUBJECT: BRAZIL HOSTS THE I SOUTH AMERICAN FISHERS FORUM ON SOLVING  
THE INCIDENTAL CAPTURES OF SEABIRDS IN FISHERIES -SAFF1

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## Summary

1. On December 12-14, an OES-sponsored workshop with the slogan "Catch Fish Not Birds" brought together 50 experts from across the world to take a look at the potential to reduce seabird bycatch throughout the South American long-line fishery via the adoption of mitigation measures in South America fishing fleets. As a result of the event, several solutions to reduce the incidental catch of sea birds were identified between fishers, fishing entrepreneurs,

researchers, NGO's and governments. In addition, the partners conducted a full discussion of the economic and environmental benefits of reducing sea bird bycatch and committed themselves to implementing some of these mitigation measures throughout South America. End Summary

The event - SAFF 1

¶2. The event, the "First South American Fishers Forum on Solving the Incidental Captures of Seabirds in Fisheries-SAFF-1", was held December 12-14 in Guarujá, São Paulo State, Brazil. The workshop was funded with a USD 29,500 OES-I grant administered through the Instituto Albatroz and sponsored by the NGO The Care for the Wild from the United Kingdom in partnership with Southern Seabird Solutions from New Zealand. The key organizers of the event were Tatiana Neves, Projeto Albatroz General Coordinator, and Janice Molloy, from Southern Seabird Solutions, New Zealand. The Brazilian Environment Agency (IBAMA) also contributed to organizing the event and in coordinating the implementation of the Brazilian National Plan for the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels - NPOA-Seabirds/Brazil. In total, the workshop attracted approximately 50 participants from eleven countries (Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, New Zealand, Peru, Spain, United Kingdom (Malvinas/Falklands), Uruguay, and USA).

¶3. The SAFF1 opening session was attended by Dr. Altemir Gregolin, Ministry of Aquaculture and Fisheries Special Secretariat of the Brazilian Presidency; Dr. Romulo Mello, IBAMA's Fauna Director; Patricia Palumbo, President of Instituto Albatroz; and the Guarujá Municipality Environment Secretariat. The unified message was that the forum was being held so that institutions from different countries could take advantage of opportunities for greater collaboration in developing new paths to improve the environmental

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and social performance of the fishing business in South America and to promote solutions to reduce seabird bycatch in longline fisheries.

Seabird and Fisheries Interactions - An overview

¶4. Incidental bycatch from longline fishing operations has been identified as a major source of mortality for many seabird species throughout the Southern Ocean threatening some species with extinction. More than 100,000 seabirds are killed every year due to interactions with the longline fishing industry. For many species, this mortality rate often exceeds the population's reproductive rate. This has led in part to what the IUCN 2006 report on albatrosses indicated was nineteen of the world's twenty-one albatross species now being faced with extinction.

¶5. Simple methods for reducing the number of the birds caught have been developed. For example towing bird-scaring lines (tori-lines), dyeing the bait blue and setting lines at night are some mitigation measures that have been tested and implemented in some fisheries such as the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) Treaty area resulting in decreases in sea bird mortality of over 90 percent. In addition, the issue of seabird mortality is directly linked with improving efficiency in the longline fleets. When the seabirds eat the bait, the main consequence is the reduction of the production capacity of the longline vessels. For example, it has been estimated that the Japanese longline fleet in the Tasmanian Sea suffers an annual loss of USD 4.3 million because of this particular interaction.

Seabird and Fisheries Interaction in South America - Country Updates

¶6. Dr. Carlos Moreno, from Universidad Austral de Chile, noted that, in Chile, 25 percent of the reduction of the Black-browed Albatross population is due to the industrial Patagonian toothfish fisheries in Chile operating since 1990. According to Moreno, since 2003 Chile has been developing the National Action Plan to Reducing Seabird Interaction in the Chilean Longline Fisheries (PAN-AM) and defined measures to revise some fisheries, such as pelagic and demersal (bottom) longline fisheries. According to the research

program of the PAN-AM the main techniques that need to be re-tested are the effectiveness of integrated weighted lines in demersal

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fisheries, the use of streamer lines, also known as bird-scaring lines or torilines, in combination with other simple measures to nearly eliminate seabird mortality.

¶7. In Peru, research on small-scale longliners confirmed a high seabird mortality rate - as much as 7.4 birds/1,000 hooks in some areas, with an average range of 0.74-1.75 birds/1,000 hooks. Approximately 40 percent were albatrosses, and other seabirds frequently caught included shearwaters, boobies and pelicans.

¶8. In Brazil, vessels primarily targeting swordfish, but also tuna and shark, have increased dramatically since 1998, and more than 12,000 seabirds are killed each year in these fisheries, including some species threatened with extinction. However, since 2001, the Projeto Albatroz has worked for the seabirds' conservation in the Southwestern Atlantic, which is an extremely important feeding area for many albatross species. The Projeto Albatroz goals are to make the domestic longline fleet aware of the problem, to implement mitigation measures, and to monitor the seabird bycatch using the Brazilian National Plan of Action for the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (NPOA-Seabird/Brazil) as a model to implement fishing practices and adopt safe and inexpensive mitigation measures to reduce seabird bycatch in the region.

How conservation groups, researchers and government can support fishermen - Workshop Conclusions

¶9. On the final day of the forum, the participants were split into small groups to discuss specific issues. The first group addressed observer programs such as BirdLife International's Albatross Task Force, that works at-sea and on-shore to encourage the adoption of mitigation measures and to collect baseline bycatch data, where required. The Task Force currently has three full-time mitigation instructors working in South Africa and two employees working in the pelagic fisheries of Brazil. There are also plans to have two people based in Chile by the end of 2006 or early 2007, and negotiations are underway to have a further 4-6 people working in South America in 2007/08. The Task Force was designed to provide capacity and experience to help advance research into the development of pelagic fishery mitigation measures. BirdLife was congratulated on progress made over the last 12 months in the implementation of the Task Force and was encouraged to further expand the scope and size of the project.

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¶10. The second group addressed the effective ways to introduce fishermen to mitigation measures and concluded that the economic efficiency approaches to define economic loss analysis in the fisheries business could be one possibility. In addition, other factors that could result in the fisheries adopting these measures included market threats such as the "Chilean sea Bass" ban, as well as the positive incentive of potential certification of well-managed fisheries. The need for awareness-raising materials in appropriate languages using fishermen to talk to other fishermen to get a message accepted and also providing critical training for key fishermen players, including fishery compliance observer officers and fishery monitors in ports and harbors throughout South America were also viewed as key elements of the strategy.

¶11. The third group addressed the strategies to attain the benefits of sustainable seafood markets for South America. According to experts Dr. Martin Hall, from IATTC and Douglas Meyer from Bernuth & Williamson Consulting/Seafood Choices Alliance, the key strategy is to develop an environmental standard for sustainable and well-managed fisheries to help pre-certification by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC). As of November 2006, 21 fisheries have been certified under this system and there are more than 450 products on the market worldwide with the label. The role of large consumers of fisheries products such as Wal-Mart and their stated

goals of buying only MSC certified fisheries products was also underscored.

¶12. The main actions to improve emerging markets for sustainable seafood and its relevance to seabirds should be addressed by an identification of fisheries which have the potential for export, to involve local governments into the process of local certification, to integrate the certification process into the marine conservation approach, to define criteria and specific standards for each certification, and to improve the knowledge of the chain of custody of the product. This group thought it would be useful to contact institutions to produce Wallet cards of the sustainably harvested species, to look into the possibility of creating regional approaches to certification, and to search for regional partnerships (local governments, fisheries industries, cooperatives and NGO's) for environment solutions with a market incentive.

Comment:

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¶13. The forum was successful in achieving its stated objectives of bringing together fishers, seabird bycatch experts, and others to introduce the fishing industries to the various methods to reduce interactions with seabirds and to obtain commitments from these industries to reduce seabird bycatch. The long-term success, however, will depend on how the efforts to reduce seabird bycatch levels in fisheries will be implemented by the industry and whether or not regulations requiring these measures are legislated by the governments in the region.

¶15. Workshop information, presentation, photographs and results will be posted at <http://www.forumdepescadores.com.br>. For further information contact Tatiana Neves, Instituto Albatroz General Coordinator, [tneves@projetoalbatroz.org.br](mailto:tneves@projetoalbatroz.org.br).

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